

REMARKS

The present amendment is being submitted pursuant to an oral interview with Examiner Vip Patel at the offices of Mr. Patel in the United States Patent and Trademark Office on September 4, 1997. The courtesy of this interview and the very helpful comments advanced by Examiner Patel at the interview is greatly appreciated.

At the outset, although applicant did state in the remarks of its amendment B that these spark plugs are used with high performance vehicles, and indeed they are, applicant also wishes to stress the fact that they can be used widely with conventional vehicles. Interestingly, the spark plug of the type in Nishida, et al may actually be designed for high performance vehicles.

In applicant's amendment B, applicant also stated in the paragraphs spanning pages 12 and 13 that there was not a true jump across the gap in Nishida, et al. Indeed, this is true. Even more so, there is no actual air gap, as such in Nishida, et al. Consequently, Nishida, et al is not nearly as efficient as the device in the instant application.

During the interview, the applicant's undersigned representative stressed the fact that the Nishida, et al patent does not disclose those limitations which had been added to the claims in applicant's amendment B. Specifically, applicant's undersigned representative pointed out how Nishida, et al clearly describe the fact that they are creating a creepage discharge along the length of the insulator. Contrariwise, that is precisely what the applicant does not do. Specifically, the applicant creates a

360° annular sparking path between the inner electrode and the outer annular electrode, and particularly the disk-shaped element. Moreover, the claims call for the fact that the disk-shaped element has a peripheral size which is almost equal to the peripheral size of the outer electrode end face.

Examiner Patel stated that the size of the disk-shaped element and the fact that the electrode to the spark path does not travel along the length of the insulator appears to be two major and distinct differences. Examiner Patel further suggested that either of these points should be stressed in the claims so as to more fully patentably distinguish over Nishida, et al. It is noted that the size of the disk-shaped element is already stressed in the claims and, therefore, this alone should patentably distinguish over the art of record. In addition, applicant has further amended the claims to recite that the spark plug does not create a creepage discharge against an outer surface of the insulator. It is urged that this is another major distinction which patentably defines over Nishida, et al.

Inasmuch as the aforesaid limitations have been included in each of the independent claims, it is believed that these claims now patentably distinguish over the art of record. At the aforesaid interview, Examiner Patel courteously indicated that the claims, as proposed herein, would be more favorably considered. It is therefore believed that this amendment places the application in condition for final allowance and favorable reconsideration and allowance is therefore respectfully solicited.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,



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